

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 04697 230551Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----097707 231521Z /53

R 230354Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3387
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
JCS
CINCPAC
CINCPACAF
CINCPACREPPHIL
13TH AF CLARK AB
CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 4697

EXDIS

MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE
A.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, RP
SUBJECT: BASE NEGOTIATIONS: MELCHOR'S ROLE

REF: MANILA 4589

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH ALEX MELCHOR (FORMER EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO PRESIDENT MARCOS AND ANNAPOLIS GRADUATE) HE TOLD ME THAT PRESIDENT MARCOS HAD GIVEN HIM ON MONDAY THE ENTIRE PACKAGE OF U.S. PROPOSALS AND PHILIPPINE REPLY FOR MELCHOR TO REVIEW. I AM ARRANGING TO MEET MELCHOR NEXT WEEK TO LEARN MORE OF HIS VIEWS.

2. I TOOK OCCASION TO POINT OUT OUR PARTICULAR CONCERN OVER SUBIC BAY, STATING THAT MELCHOR, AS FORMER NAVY MAN, SHOULD UNDERSTAND THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY FOR THE U.S. TO CONTROL THE WATERS ADJACENT TO SUBIC BAY INCLUDING GRANDE ISLAND.
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PAGE 02 MANILA 04697 230551Z

IXENTIONED THAT AT CAVITE THE INABILITY OF PHILIPPINE AUTHORITIES TO CONTROL ADJACENT WATERS HAD APPARENTLY RESULTED IN DECREASING UTILIZATION OF THAT BASE. MELCHOR SAID HE WAS AWARE OF THIS AND AWARE OF THE PROBLEM AND HE FELT A COMPRIMISE SOLUTION MIGHT BE POSSIBLE. I TOLD HIM I WOULD WELCOME HIS SUGGESTIONS.

3. I ASKED MELCHOR ABOUT REPORTS I HAD RECEIVED THAT PRESIDENT MARCOS MIGHT BE SENDING HIM TO THE UNITED STATES TO CONFER WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND THE MEDIA. HE SAID HE WAS GLAD I HAD HEARD ABOUT THIS. IT WAS A DELICATE MATTER SINCE IT SUGGESTED A LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE CURRENT AMBASSADOR ROMUALDEZ. MELCHOR SAID HE WAS CONSIDERING WHAT HE MIGHT DO BUT WOULD NOT IN ANY EVENT BE GOING UNTIL AFTER ELECTIONS. HE WAS PREPARING A LETTER FOR THE PRESIDENT ON THE SUBJECT. I SAID THAT I HAD URGED THE PRESIDENT TO DO MORE TO MAKE DIRECT CONTACT NOT ON A PUBLIC RELATIONS BASIS BUT ON A BASIS WHICH SOUGHT TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATIONS IN BOTH DIRECTIONS. IT WAS AS IMPORTANT FOR THE PRESIDENT TO HEAR CANDIDLY WHAT KEY PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES FELT AS IT WAS TO CONVEY PHILIPPINE VIEWS. MELCHOR SAID HE AGREED ALTHOUGH CANDID PRESENTATION TO THE PRESIDENT SOMETIMES PRESENTED PROBLEMS.

4. COMMENT: PRESIDENT'S TURNING TO MELCHOR IS AN INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT FURTHER SUGGESTING THAT HE DOES NOT TOTALLY ENDORSE PROPOSALS PUT BEFORE US ON MARCH 21.
NEWSOM

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